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Acquisition Research Program Need to Know Newsletter

2020-04-20

NPS Need to Know Newsletter Acquisition Research Program, 2020-04-20

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Dear ARP friends,

This week brings issue #3 of ARP's weekly newsletter, which highlights key developments in acquisition, policy, government innovation, and research—as well as the latest news about ARP events and research. As always, let us know if you are doing work we can highlight in future issues.

April 10, 2020



[LINK!!](#)

This Week's Top Story

Modernizing DOD Requirements: Enabling Speed, Agility, And Innovation

Peter J. Modigliani, Dan Ward, Tyler Lewis, Wayne McGee Jr., The MITRE Corporation

The world is accelerating into the future, but the Department of Defense's (DoD's) requirements system is stuck in the past. The current approach to generating requirements is too slow to produce results when they matter most, too inflexible to account for an unpredictable environment, and too narrowly focused to satisfy joint warfighting needs across all domain operations.

This paper proposes a three-pronged approach to reforming the requirements process. First, the DoD should refine what it means by "requirements." Defining enduring, enterprise-level requirements within major mission areas allows for management at the portfolio level, improving alignment across systems and enabling more flexibility and innovation at lower levels. Next, the DoD should establish an Adaptive Requirements Framework that parallels the new Adaptive Acquisition Framework and provides new pathways for generating and validating requirements. Finally, the DoD should rethink how programs progress through each of the new pathways.

The DoD should adopt Warfighter Essential Requirements (WER) and a portfolio management approach. As opposed to ideal or 'perfect world' requirements for unique platforms, WER express what the warfighter needs to accomplish the mission at an acceptable level of risk. They do not focus on individual systems but apply at the portfolio level. As such, they represent a practical level of effort that can serve as the starting point or "aim point" for architects to build system-of-systems or enterprise solutions. Armed with WER, architects empowered to manage a portfolio of programs can conduct rigorous systems-of-systems analysis and deliver capabilities at speed. The WER then become the yardstick with which to measure the resilience and effectiveness of potential enterprise architecture options. Moreover, measures of how a

specific force mix performs against these requirements provide a feedback signal, impelling the portfolio to iteratively deliver capabilities to maximize performance. In this way, foundational warfighter needs become enduring and will not be pared down if they drive unacceptable acquisition risk in any individual program.

[Read more.](#)

Acquisition and Innovation

[New Satellites Will Be a Big Step in the Pentagon's Plan to Link Everything](#)

Patrick Tucker, Defense One

[DHS seeks knowledge management system for procurement lab](#)

Billy Mitchell, FedScoop

[Contractors want extended deadline to rid Chinese tech from networks](#)

Jackson Barnett, FedScoop

[Telecommunications: Agencies Should Fully Implement Established Transition Planning Practices to Help Reduce Risk of Costly Delays](#)

GAO

[MiMedx Group Inc. Agrees to Pay \\$6.5 Million to Resolve False Claims Act Allegations of False Commercial Pricing Disclosures](#)

Department of Justice Press Release

Defense and Federal Government

[Teleworking boom prompts another cloud rollout from DOD](#)

Jackson Barnett, FedScoop

[The Pentagon's supply chain faces an economy under siege](#)

Valerie Insinna and Aaron Mehta, Defense News

[With the commercial aviation industry in a nosedive, the Defense Department offers airlines a lifeline](#)

Valerie Insinna, Defense News

[Pentagon Delays Budget Deadline to Help Staff Work from Home](#)

Marcus Weisgerber and Katie Bo Williams, Defense One

[DIU looking for help to reduce data latency in military command and control networks](#)

Jackson Barnett, FedScoop

['Space Force' sitcom starring Steve Carell landing on Netflix in May](#)

J. D. Simkins, Military Times

COVID-19 and Contracting

[Request for White Papers: COVID-19 Prototype PPE and Decontamination Equipment](#)

Defense Logistics Agency

[DOD Allows Payments to Contractors Who Cannot Work Due to COVID-19 Facility Closures or Other Restrictions](#)

DoD Press Release

[VA Delays Major IT Programs to Focus on COVID-19](#)

Aaron Boyd, NextGov

[6 Things To Know About The COVID-19 Relief Watchdog](#)

Andrew Kragie, Law360

[What Is the U.S. Public Health Service and What Does It Do?](#)

Tessa Robinson, We Are the Mighty

Section 809 Panel Updates

ARP is tracking the implementation status of the 98 recommendations produced by the Section 809 Panel. You will find recent posts about that effort here, and you can read more about it on our website.

This week we highlight the panel's recommendation on debriefings, from Volume 3 of its *Final Report*.

[Provide as part of a debriefing, in all procurements where a debriefing is required, a redacted source selection decision document and the technical evaluation of the vendor receiving the debriefing](#)

Despite the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) Myth-busting 3 memo, which explains how meaningful debriefings can mitigate the risk of protest, many DoD contracting agencies do not consider debriefings as a means of avoiding protests. This perception results in debriefings that many industry and private bar stakeholders described as adversarial, incomplete, and insufficient for informing unsuccessful offerors of the government's rationale for making an award. The presumption across much of DoD appears to be that the more information that is provided at a debriefing, the more likely a disappointed offeror will use the information to file a protest.

Congress should expand the Section 818 requirement to provide a redacted source selection decision document as part of a debriefing for all situations in which a debriefing is required and to also provide the technical evaluation documentation of the vendor requesting the debriefing. Providing this additional transparency should minimize the likelihood contractors will file protests because of a lack of information.

[Read more.](#)

ARP Updates

[NPS Students Finish Strong in Global Simulation Competition](#)

Tom Tonthat, Naval Postgraduate School

Congratulations to NPS student Kevan Mellendick, a member of the third-place team in a global public policy simulation, *Metropolitan: A Sustainable Transit Simulation*. The simulation was built using real-world data and challenged students to collaborate on transportation policies in order to improve the sustainability of their virtual city.

[Been There, Done That: An Exercise to Experience](#)

Charles Pickar, Naval Postgraduate School

Commentary written by Dr. Charles Pickar, senior lecturer in the Graduate School of Defense Management, was chosen as Editors' Pick for Runner Up in the Best Commentary category of the ALTies Awards. His commentary, "Been There, Done That: An Exercise to Experience," published in the Fall 2019 issue of Army AL&T magazine, proposes blending wargaming with acquisition program management in a dynamic environment.

ARP is on social media

ARP's new social media accounts post the day's top news story, updates about ARP research, and information about the upcoming symposium.

Follow us; tag us with your news: twitter @arp_nps LinkedIn: @acquisition_research_program

Policy and Regulatory Updates

[Class Deviation—Limitations on Subcontracting for Small Business](#)

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment

[Defense Pricing and Contracting: COVID-19 Resources](#)

Congress

[HASC chairman could use next stimulus to help defense industrial base](#)

Aaron Mehta, Defense News

[US Military Can Do More to Help with Coronavirus, House Armed Services Chief Says](#)

Marcus Weisgerber, Defense One

[Smith, Pallone, & Thompson Urge President Trump to Coordinate Production and Acquisition of COVID-19 Response Supplies](#)

House Armed Services Committee Press Release

[Senate Armed Services shelves 'paper hearing' plans](#)

Rebecca Kheel, The Hill

[Pandemic 'accelerating' House modernization as lawmakers push for remote votes, hearings](#)

Jory Heckman, Federal News Network

Research

[Software Acquisition Workforce Initiative for the Department of Defense: Initial Competency Development and Preparation for Validation](#)

RAND Corporation

[DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT: Agencies Lack Policies and Guidance for Use of Key Authorities \(2008\)](#)

GAO

Read the newsletter online: